

Brian Cassidy
G-80: Identifying and Understanding Twentieth-Century Technologies
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1) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Are there any readings that you would like to see added or removed in future years?*

1. Yes! I plan to make extensive use of the readings and videos BC provided us.
2. Yes! I did not get to read them all in time for the course, so appreciated their annotated descriptions; the wieldy-sized, carefully chosen selection; their division into priority vs. extra; and the instructor designing the course such that the pre-readings and homework readings were useful, but one could equally follow and enjoy the class if you weren't able to do these. I especially enjoyed Rich Dana's *Cheap Copies!* book.
3. Yes. It was a lot, and I did not finish, but it was valuable.
4. Yes. Not too much, but there could even have been more required readings— or videos—as preparation.
5. BC did not assume we had actually read the pre-course readings. I recommend updating the list and clarifying, like an email did a few days before class, that they're recommended rather than required.
6. They were useful. Though I'm not sure that reading *Bartelby* really helped/wasn't really discussed in class, I still enjoyed it.
7. Yes, could clarify just a few notes regarding access/expectations, e.g., which chapters to focus on, &c. Was great to have access to PDFs. Rich Dana's book was so cool.
8. Yes, I really enjoyed and appreciated the pre-course readings, and the email from the instructor was extremely useful in planning. However, I think the email might be a bit more useful a few days earlier.
9. {no response}
10. I liked reviewing the *Office Copying Revolution* and *Cheap Copies!* ahead of time for an overview of the many processes and then reviewing the relevant sections of Batterham each night for a refresher before class. I will be looking at all of them again after class for reference when I'm back in the archives.
11. Yes. I also liked the evening homework assignments during the week. They were a good balance to the lectures.

2) *What are your thoughts on the course workbook and/or other teaching materials distributed during class? Was the content appropriate and useful? Will it continue to be useful for you after the course?*

1. I plan to keep and use my workbook for the rest of my career. It is a great tool!
2. The course workbook was excellent and will be a reference in my future work. And I was floored by the in-class "kits"—each student had an archival box at their desk, containing ~60 documents in well-labeled, ordered folders that helped us start to

understand, identify, compare the materials we were discussing in such a compelling and enlightening way. Like, I'm mad just knowing the creation of that kit doesn't "count" in academia the same way a book would—it's an incredible work of scholarly pedagogy and research, that made an enormous difference in how much knowledge I took away from the class, and how quickly I could really comprehend and memorize what I was learning. Having multiple examples at hand right at my desk also helped me understand these materials not as perfect "x type of doc will have y identifiable properties," but as messy, varied historical artifacts that might appear very different from one another despite using the same process—but I could compare them and build an intuition of what was common and what was likely. I also deeply appreciated the care taken in what documents were included; I'm sure it was a challenge enough to find multiples of each type of document so that each student could have one or several, but care was obviously also taken that the documents represented a variety of identities, languages, histories—and also helped us see hidden histories of injustice and bravery. This course will be deeply useful in my future research and teaching, as well as my future book arts practice.

3. Yes. Loved having the bibliography.
4. The workbook will be a continued reference for me going forward, as there is nothing else out there so specific and comprehensive.
5. The workbook is useful. I think it might be more useful if it incorporated more durance on identification from slides, including the quick guide slide. I don't think it's necessary to reproduce book chapters in the workbook.
6. It would be nice to take notes in the notebook. The boxes were wonderful and so helpful. They really made everything so hands-on and represented a lot of thought and work.
7. Loved the workbook, super impressed by the kits. My only note regarding the workbook: I personally think it would be more useful if we annotated slides or note sheets within the book itself. That way we can consolidate all our notes in one place and have one handy/holy grail guide to reach for. Maybe that's just how my brain works. But I felt we weren't reaching for the workbooks much during class time, more of a take home resource—which is still wonderful and much appreciated.
8. BC's kits were an incredible learning aid! I appreciated being able to look at an exemplar while it was being introduced. It was also a great way to compare and contrast different processes. Having the workbook and slides to take way will be a great resource—I know I will revisit them regularly!
9. The course workbook was/is an invaluable resource for now and future. Love the DETAILED annotated bibliography and texts included. Very thoughtful and will help with continued study.
10. The workbook will be most useful after class—I am grateful to have the presentation slides for reference when back in the archives—especially the summary cheat sheet slide for identifying processes and the timeline of technique/machine usage.
11. I think the slides BC shared will be very useful to me in the future. It will be great to compare images there to items in my institution's collection.

3) *Which aspects of the course were most intriguing and relevant for you as an individual? Did you walk away with any new insights, ideas, or project plans?*

1. Identifying and the bibliographical aspect of our work. I plan to do a workshop for students and staff on the hectograph.
2. This course will be deeply useful in my future research and teaching, as well as my future book arts practice. I loved the hands-on printing/duplicating work, getting to see the processes and do some and realize things I couldn't have without running into all the problems, smells, &c. of actually using a historical duplication technology. I loved the wonkery about machine history—and how tightly that focus on mechanics, parts, STS history, art and office practices, &c. was woven into meaning: the revealed human stories captured by these artifacts. I've got multiple plans: for a year-long research and practice cohort in my research center, for two infographic posters synthesizing my learning, refurbishing a mimeograph, teaching others what I learned. I have a stronger sense of how to explain why non-digital technology is part of "digital humanities" work and interests.
3. More than I can say. There are several collections I want to return to with new eyes. Thinking a lot about attention given to collections.
4. Having comparative folders in the packets was hugely important. I will be able to take in fun new projects in my library work/my teaching as a result.
5. This class taught a different way of looking at documents, oriented towards process and materials. I leave with many insights and ideas for projects; the only challenge will be finding time for them.
6. The mimeograph, offset, and Xerox were particularly important in the mid-twentieth century and on. This course was exactly what I needed, perhaps more than I could have hoped. Personally, it gave me many new insights for my own research (I'll be revising some archives armed with a new eye!). I also found it very validating to hear BC articulate his own ways of sidewinding into these topics and skills and some of the difficulties of this work.
7. 100% all of it. I felt very engaged. Left with insights/ thinking about how the technology in a question impacted culture. Like Marshall McLuhan said, "We shape our tools, and our tools shape us." These kinds of materials are often dismissed, I think, and it felt great to think critically about how they were made and their meaning.
8. I am deeply appreciative that the course is geared towards identification. I have come away with a strong understanding of the significance of duplicating technologies in terms of labor, skill, and artistry as well as understanding the histories of their creators. I have a much more nuanced perspective on material culture and our historical record. I am looking forward to incorporating the course content into my description practice.
9. The discussions of distinctions between mimeo and spirit and the discussion of offset. Also, the help with seeing connections between the processes, possible printing "errors" and how to identify materials. I have lots of new insights, yes! And will revisit texts I've been working with to do some deeper description and to hopefully write with a better understanding about invisible labor in radical movements.
10. I have a new appreciation for the work that goes into self-publishing in the twentieth century and hope to build/interpret our collections to convey that to

students and visitors in our exhibits and instruction sessions I will be mining our collection for examples going forward and correcting/updating our collection records with more accurate info.

11. Physically handling many, many documents was especially helpful. The more examples the better.

4) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*

1. Yes, I learned a lot and am more aware of the materials we discussed. I will be much more mindful with my descriptions.
2. Absolutely; the instructor was amazing at helping everyone understand, providing so many examples, extra readings, suggestions. He did a great job balancing the material that needed to be delivered by lecture, with fun and effective hands-on making, document identifying investigations, and a SC tour and excellent short group project challenging us to identify not just materials but the implied history of them. He was always approachable and helpful. A great teacher!
3. Yes—of course a week was not enough time for everything but with continued reinforcement I think it will stick.
4. Yes—and then some!
5. Yes, absolutely.
6. Absolutely. I love how practical this was, and I appreciated the patient articulation of a clean methodology, set of goals and a real consideration of the relationship between technique, form, and content.
7. Yes! So exhaustive/comprehensive/thorough. So many examples.
8. Yes, the instructor has an impressive breadth of knowledge and presents complex technologies and ideas in a way that is both engaging and understandable.
9. Yes! That and beyond! I learned even more than I anticipated about a range of processes and felt like we did ample practice and review to really absorb the skills needed to do it on our own.
10. Yes!
11. Yes! This was a great introduction to the topic. The level of technical detail was perfect. I appreciated that we were encouraged to connect our process identifications to the meaning of the documents.

5) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*

1. As mentioned, I plan to work on including some terminology in my descriptive work and spread the gospel about duplication!
2. I have research, teaching, and book arts practice plans, as described in the “what aspects of the course were most intriguing...” answer (Q3). Many plans, from an inspiring educational experience.

3. To reconsider collections—maybe do a little writing.
4. As a curator, to identify and describe examples in my own collections; for new acquisitions. In class, to talk more authoritatively in my history with such classes.
5. As an archivist, in determining primacy of copies, understanding better the contexts in which they were produced, and interpreting them for students and researchers.
6. For an article I'm currently changing, and for my dissertation. I also want to incorporate this into my teaching in special collections and curatorial work. Finally, I got some fun ideas for my own creative print/ duplication projects (I've been working with toner powder mixed with floor polish to create photo lines for books and I have new ideas for this view).
7. In my daily work as I engage with materials coming into my library. In deciding what to buy in tours/potential open houses in the future when we display materials—bringing in insight on technology/processes used to produce as part of context
8. I will apply my new knowledge of duplication processes to my archival description work. I am also planning to continue to research and practice my newly acquired skills.
9. Possibly share some aspects to graduate fellows with the goal of better descriptions in database. Write about how these works show up in Black print materials of interest to me (with heavy citation to this course). The meaning-making discussions excited me most.
10. In building a collection, more accurate descriptions, interpretation of exhibits, and teaching instruction sessions.
11. I work with a cataloger to identify materials and process types for our collection. We have had many confusing materials lately and I can already see how my identification skills have improved.

6) *Who might benefit the most from taking this RBS course?*

1. Archivists and catalogers.
2. Anyone studying, collecting, working in libraries with zines; anyone studying/doing/teaching twentieth-century history, especially if you're doing any archival work, so that you understand the documents you're looking at—how they were made, by whom, with what effort—able to identify forgeries or inconsistencies, and most importantly able to read and bring to life hidden human stories that can be read from these materials if one understands what process created them.
3. Unclear. Archivists and special collections librarians, I assume.
4. Anyone who works with twentieth-century materials!
5. Archivists responsible for archival appraisal and description, manuscript dealers, scholars interested in conditions of document production as part of media and literary studies.
6. I know archivists and librarians do, but I strongly feel that students and young researchers have so much to gain.

7. Booksellers, librarians, cataloguers, collectors, conservators, printers (familiar mainly with pre-twentieth-century printing).
8. I think this should be required for all archivists and catalogers.
9. Scholars, researchers, archivists, scholars of print culture. Other collectors (in/near and beyond academia), rare book sellers, and museum folks.
10. Curators, catalogers, archivists, and academics focused on twentieth-century archival, ephemeral, and alternative culture collections.
11. This class was recommended to me by a conservator. I will likely recommend it to other conservators.

7) *If applicable, what were the most original, powerful, or otherwise noteworthy educational moments in the course? Were there any "aha!" moments you'd like to share?*

1. Identifying sessions along with the Howl talk. Both very interesting and impactful.
2. Many of the example documents chosen were deeply meaningful: the mimeograph newsletter from a U.S. 1940s concentration camp, during a month where we've returned to what there's widespread understanding is the same; the many examples of how these techniques allowed people to safely communicate when their identities, content &c. put them at risk. The steady connection throughout of the ability to identify and understand duplication processes as about retrieving hidden labor, human stories, making meaning.
3. Solving the puzzles by ourselves were like that! Every single time I realized something about a collection from my past.
4. Comparing punk zines. Hyers bibliography was one of the most surprising and rewarding things we did for me.
5. My "aha" moment was a sense that duplicating technologies evolved from the same impulses as hand press printing did—labor-saving and communication—but almost as if in a parallel universe, with different technological vocabularies.
6. Yes! I was intimidated by the station identification activity, but I actually ended up finding it to be extremely meaningful. Seeing toner powder sitting proud on the page also felt weirdly impactful, and I loved seeing maquettes.
7. Empowering to know we have the tools to identify materials/triangulate evidence/make sense/meaning. There are a lot of gaps in the scholarship in this area. Opened up interesting discussions regarding cataloguing/genre terms
8. I think looking at any/all examples were equally "aha!" I think the greatest strength of the course is its hands-on nature, which is the best way to learn this material!
9. The hectograph was a real "aha!" for me. Truly a DIY technology that can be done without surveillance in many ways. On the other hand, I was reminded of the surveillance built into the documents we create today. Also powerful to remember the work FBI did to infiltrate movements by using print culture.
10. I felt very proud of my confidence in our identification activities at the end—to even get 80% accuracy across 30 different documents was so much progress given how little I knew about these processes beforehand!

11. My favorite part of the class was practicing what we had learned in the lectures. I enjoyed passing documents around and discussing our process guesses with the class. (Similarly, I enjoyed our “quiz.”) I know time is tight, but I would have enjoyed doing even more of this type of activity. BC’s enthusiasm and energy for the material are contagious. Aside from the extremely useful content, this was a very fun way to spend five days.

8) *Are there any other ways in which the course could have been improved?*

1. More identifying!
2. I truly can’t think of any. This course rocked, would recommend to anyone.
3. N/A
4. Even more examples, and an increasingly global treatment of the technologies, if possible.
5. N/A
6. If possible, even more identification questions/activities. I like doing creative projects but I didn’t find the quire/spirit day particularly helpful, though seeing the gelatin bed was very interesting. Personally, I would also like more focus on text and image and the different concerns of printing both with different techniques.
7. N/A
8. I would have liked more time to sit with the kit alone. The reality is we had so much material to cover that I’m not sure if this is possible. Also, I am slower to process and sometimes wanted more time on quizzes and looking exercises. Absolutely one of the best courses of my professional life.
9. Honestly, no. Great mix of teaching, time to ask questions or discuss, looking at stuff, reference library on site, group work and office hours! I would 100% recommend it to others.
10. {private response}
11. I found the time with the UVA SC materials to be the least useful part of the class. My day-to-day work is more similar to the classroom exercises where I was able to touch and examine materials through magnification.

9) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? How likely are you to recommend this course to others? On a 1-10 scale, 1 would indicate that you disagree that you got your money's worth, 5 would indicate a neutral response, and 10 would indicate that you agree that you got your money's worth.*

1. 10
2. 10
3. 10
4. 10

5. 10
6. 9
7. 10
8. 10
9. 10
10. 10
11. 10

10) *If your course made any (virtual) field trips outside of the classroom or had guest speakers, do you feel that they enhanced the course experience?*

1. It was interesting to see the rarer duplication methods and how they were used.
2. Loved the hands-on work in the RBS print shop; loved the visit to SC to see special materials, and benefitted from excellent archival colleagues' labor and knowledge.
3. Yes. Wish we could do MORE practicing with the actual processes.
4. The visit to SC added materials that were new and significant to the class, absolutely.
5. We went to UVA's SC. That visit could either be shorter or include more material, but it did allow us to see the uses of duplicating in the specific, and otherwise hard to find, context of late nineteenth-century textbooks.
6. It was difficult not being able to get close to the Special Collections objects, but I also understand.
7. Yes, to SC. Helped remind us of processes away from our notebooks, see what kinds of materials to look out for specifically in an institution context vs. a bookseller's curated collection. Plus just great to see more examples.
8. It was helpful to see more examples at SC. The more examples the better
9. Yes, they did. I better understand the processes we did by hand in the lab. SC visit was okay—may have fit better on the first day. But less interesting since we couldn't handle the material.
10. I enjoyed the visit to SC to see examples from their collection—also grateful that our instructor had so many examples for us to examine in class.
11. I think if anything could get cut from the class, it would have been our trip to SC.

11) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*

1. Not many, it was dialogue heavy, but BC is an engaging speaker, and his research and care in this work comes across clearly. Really enjoyed this course.
2. Do it! And I hear it's quite popular, so keep applying if you don't get in.
3. {no response}
4. Do the video watching homework for nightly preparation, reinforcement.
5. {no response}

6. I honestly thought some of these office documents would be extremely full, but I was drawn in and learned to see them in a new light—just for that, it's worth it.
7. It is helpful to have a background/some familiarity with print history pre-twentieth century, I think.
8. Be open to the experience. Pay close attention to not miss anything. Look carefully.
9. {no response}
10. Don't be overwhelmed with the pre-course readings; while all the processes blend together, they will sort themselves out with repeated discussion and real-world examples.
11. I haven't taken a lecture course in a long time and I remembered how much I enjoy and gain from this format. The lectures were extremely well organized and clearly presented. (I also appreciated how loudly BC spoke—my hearing is poor, but I could hear everything very clearly).

12) If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or haiku, what would you say?

1. A thought-provoking course on how twentieth-century duplication technology impacts our understanding of social and cultural history with a heavy emphasis on practical tools for identification!
2. Printing with Jello!!! (But seriously: a document carries the signature of the machines and humans that made it; to know how to read those is to know how to bring hidden labor, human stories back to life and light).
3. I had fun! BC's excitement was contagious. I want to know more.
4. Overwhelming information turns to understanding in five days.
5. Look at copies. Closer. What is the evidence of their creation, of their material reality?
6. Intensive—blurry-eyed (or blurry lettered?!)—knowledge/I couldn't find/Anywhere else.
7. It was hot here, I was feverous to come, I met really great people, I was super impressed by BC, I learned SO much, grateful to be here. Thank you!
8. I am deeply grateful to BC for sharing his knowledge and passion for twentieth-century duplicating technologies!
9. The course was one I wish I knew about years ago. It answered questions I felt I was asking in isolation in graduate school without guidance even from faculty or archivists. Invaluable!
10. {no response}
11. {no response}